Split Second Worksheet

1. Describe the *stasis* in the play: where, when, who, what, etc. in a paragraph.

The place is New York City. It is July 4th, late at night. It is set in present day, starting with Val and Willis having a dispute over a car that Willis was attempting to steal.

2. What is the *intrusion*?

When Val shoots Willis and realizes what he has done.

3. What is the *unique factor*?

That this is the time that Willis was attempting to steal the vehicle while Val was on duty.

4. What is the *dramatic question* that should be answered by the end of the play?

Will Val confess to the courts that he staged the scene after he shot Willis? Will they find out themselves?

5. Provide an illustration of the *two kinds of exposition* that the play has in it.

The first kind of exposition is the exposition that only Val knows, he is the only one who knows EXACTLY what happened during the scene when he shot Willis.

Everyone knows that Willis is dead and there has to be a trial.

6. Identify the most *theatrical moment* in the play and of what importance it seems to be.

When Willis is going on and on with the racial slurs and you can see the anger rise inside of Val. The importance is that this is the point when Val shoots Willis because he gets so worked up about the words that Willis is saying.

7. List some of the *themes* of the play.

Racism, truth, honor, respect, reputation, obligations, consciousness

8. What do the principal characters *want* and what are some *obstacles* that stand in the way of them getting what they want?

Val wants honor and respect, but he can only receive that if he tells the truth. If he tells the truth he will go to jail.

9. Describe some possible *images* in the play and how does the *title* help us understand the play.

Split Second alludes to the scene where Val shoots Willis where it took him a split second to decide to shoot Willis for his words. Another image is war which is used to kind of rationalize the killing of Willis.

10. Briefly define the *family relationships* that are examined in the play.

The family relationships are complicated because Val and Rusty are father and son, but they do not act very caring or loving. Rusty cares very much about Val’s career because he was also cop at one point and I feel as if Rusty wants Val to continue HIS career, not his own. The wife is concerned and ultimately makes Val’s decision for him.